

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6696

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C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 2315

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BG, BM, CB, VN, VS

SUBJECT: BANGLADESH AND INDOCHINA

1. WHEN I ASKED FOREIGN SECRETARY FAKHRUDDIN AHMED ON FRIDAY WHAT IMPLICATIONS HE SAW FOR BANGLADESH IN THE CHANGED SITUATION IN INDOCHINA, HE SAID THEY WERE NOW REASSESSING THIS SITUATION AND HAD ASKED THEIR AMBASSADOR IN RANGOON, KAISER, TO VISIT THE THREE CAPITALS OF SAIGON, HANOI AND PHNOM PENH TO MAKE A SPECIAL SURVEY AS THE BASIS FOR A NEW ASSESSMENT. HOWEVER, KAISER WAS UNABLE TO GO JUST NOW IN VIEW OF THE UNSETTLED STATE IN SOME OF THE CAPITALS AND WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO MAKE HIS SURVEY UNTIL AFTER HIS VISIT TO CHINA AND NORTH KOREA IN LATE MAY.

2. FOREIGN SECRETARY SAID THAT KAISER HAS SPOKEN, HOWEVER, TO BOTH HANOI AND SAIGON REPRESENTATIVES IN RANGOON AND HAD REPORTED ASSURANCES THAT THESE GOVERNMENTS--AND IT WAS PRG POLICY WHICH WAS PARTICULARLY AT ISSUE--WOULD FOLLOW POLICY OF MODERATION BOTH INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY AND WOULD ALSO FOLLOW POLICY ON NON-ALIGNMENT. FOREIGN SECRETARY ADDED THAT SIHANOUK'S FOREIGN MINISTER, DURING VISIT TO DACCA TWO MONTHS AGO, HAD ALSO ASSURED THEM THAT CAMBODIA WOULD FOLLOW NON-ALIGNED POLICY.

3. NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM'S POLICY, FOREIGN SECRETARY CONTINUED, COULD ALSO BE EXPECTED
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TO BE NON-ALIGNED AS BETWEEN PEKING AND

MOSCOW, CITING LONG INDOCHINESE TRADITION OF INDEPENDENT ATTITUDES. AS THEY HAD ALL THE ARMS THEY NOW NEEDED, THERE WOULD BE NO NEED FOR THEM TO TURN ELSEWHERE FOR WEAPONS AND THEY WERE STRONG ENOUGH TO STAND ON THEIR OWN, HE THOUGHT THEY WOULD ALSO WISH TO STAY OUT OF BIG-POWER ALIGNMENTS AS CONTRARY TO THEIR REGIONAL INTERESTS.

4. SINCE BANGLADESH WAS ALSO TOTALLY COMMITTED TO NON-ALIGNMENT, FOREIGN SECRETARY CONCLUDED, THERE WERE NO IMPLICATIONS OF ANY EFFECT ON BDG INTERESTS OR OF NEED FOR ANY CHANGE IN ITS POLICY. INDEED, HE THOUGHT THE NON-ALIGNED ROLE NOW TO BE PLAYED BY PRG AND CAMBODIA WOULD HAVE SALUTARY EFFECT IN THE AREA.

5. COMMENT. WE WILL COMMENT ON THESE VIEWS WHEN WE RESPOND, PROBABLY LATER THIS WEEK, TO THE DEPARTMENT'S 107027 ON "REPERCUSSIONS IN SOUTH ASIA OF EVENTS IN INDO-CHINA."
BOSTER

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NNN

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